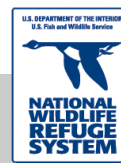


Wertheim National Wildlife Refuge

Hurricane Sandy Resiliency Project



In October 2012, Hurricane Sandy hit Wertheim National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) and caused severe flooding, habitat damage, and property damage to the refuge. To prevent future storms and sea-level rise from damaging the refuge and the surrounding community, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service was granted funding by Congress to strengthen and restore approximately 450 acres of salt marsh habitat at Wertheim NWR.



In the past, the salt marsh was altered by the construction of straight channel ditches that were created to reduce mosquito breeding areas. Overtime, the ditches have weakened the salt marsh by altering the flow of water within it.

To improve the marsh, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will be working with contractors to fill specific sections of the ditches with coir logs.

Coir logs are 10 foot long biodegradable logs made from dense coconut fiber, which will be placed in the ditches with native salt marsh plants. Some new ditches will also be created to increase the tidal flow of water on and off the marsh.

Currently, the coir logs are being temporarily stored at multiple locations on the refuge. Beginning in November 2016, coir logs will be removed from the temporary storage areas and placed in the salt marsh using equipment that will not damage the marsh surface. The project will take place from November to March to avoid damage to salt marsh plants during their growing season in spring. Herbicide treatment was also applied to Phragmites in Fall 2015 and 2016 to reduce the population of this invasive plant in the salt marsh. Using these restoration techniques, the Refuge plans to improve the salt marsh so it will be more robust in the face of future storms and sea-level rise.



As of November 2015, several aspects of the project have been visible to the public. Large walls of coir logs have been stacked in different parts of the refuge to be used on the marsh once the construction begins. Over the next few months, Refuge neighbors will also notice workers arriving at staging areas on Smith Road and Meadow Lane. Contractors will also begin staging equipment along the Refuge marshlands. Work will only be conducted Monday through Friday during daylight hours and all parking will be confined to Refuge property. Neighbors with views of the marsh will be able to see machines working on the marsh until March 2017, at which point construction will end.

Hurricane Sandy Resiliency Project Schedule

November 2015 - December 2015	Delivery of coir logs to Wertheim NWR
Fall 2015 and Fall 2016	Application of herbicide to Phragmites
November 2016 - March 2017	The ditches will be filled with coir logs and new channels will be dug
April 2017– May 2017	Salt marsh vegetation will be planted in the newly filled ditches